

Commonly Asked Questions

- Are the waterfalls running?
 - Waterfalls are seasonal and produced by heavy rainfall or snowmelt. The best time to visit a waterfall is in the spring from March through May.
- Where can I find the waterfalls?
 - Waterfalls are produced in our canyons when the rain flows along the land to the Illinois River. You can view waterfalls in the canyons along Green Interior Canyon trails such as French Canyon, Wildcat, LaSalle, Tonti, Ottawa, Kaskaskia, Illinois, Aurora, and St. Louis.
- Can you swim at the park or in the waterfalls?
 - Swimming and wading is strictly prohibited at the park due to the nature of the water which is farm runoff and the current of the Illinois River by the Lock and Dam.
- Is there rock climbing at the park?
 - All canyons and overlooks are made from St. Peters Sandstone which is a very fine grade sandstone that crumbles/erodes easily. Rock climbing, carving into the stone, and scaling the rocks is illegal in the park and extremely unsafe.
- What time does the park open and close?
 - All parking lots (but for lodge and campground) and trails are open by 6:30 a.m. and close by dark (summer =8 p.m. , fall = 6-7 p.m. , winter= 5-6 p.m., and spring 6-7 p.m.)
- Where is the campground?
 - The campground is located outside of the park off of Route 71 across the road from our South Entrance/Exit. E950th rd. The gates open at 8:30 a.m. and close at 10 p.m.
 - There are 133 sites which are reservable through www.reserveamerica.com
 - Walk up sites are usually available except for busy weekends in the summer. Please view the self registration information and availability postings at the campground permit booth.
 - The permit booth is not manned 24/7.
 - Camping information can be found at www.dnr.illinois.gov through the Park and Recreation tab.
 - Campground sites are non refundable if cancelled within 3 days of staying in the park. \$5 reservation is non refundable regardless. Reservation fee cannot be transferred. Refunds are not given for weather or after the fact of the stay.
 - Youth group reservations as well as handicap must be placed over the phone with the park office by calling 1-815-667-4726 M-F only between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The park office or visitor center does not place any other reservations over the phone or in person. Visitors must go to www.reserveamerica.com .
 - Campers may check in at 3 p.m. and check out at 3 p.m.

- Are there sites available at the campground/I would like a site tonight for camping?
 - Walk up sites are usually available except for busy weekends in the summer. Please view the self registration information and availability postings at the campground permit booth.

- How many trails do you have at the park and what are the length of the trails?
 - We have 13 miles of trails at the park.
 - Each map at the park as well as handheld maps list the one way mileage from the visitor center to each location along the trail system.

- Where am I?
 - A Yellow “you are here” dot is located on each map at every intersection and parking lot at the park.

- What trail is the best or most scenic?
 - That is subjective and hard to answer because every site at the park is beautiful in its own way. It all depends on how many miles you are willing to hike. All trails start from the Visitor Center or smaller sections from individual parking lots located off of Route 178 or Route 71. You can make a loop out of the VC to Wildcat Canyon area or even a loop from the VC to Lonetree Canyon but past Lonetree it all turns into the same trail with side trails to various locations listed along the trail.
 - Follow the brown informational signs at every trail intersection stating the name of the site you are approaching as well as directional arrows.
 - Color coded trail maps with yellow “you are here” dots are located at each intersection.
 - Green-Canyon trail
 - Brown-Bluff trail
 - Red-River trail
 - Yellow dots on trail markers mean you are moving further away from VC and lodge
 - White dots on trail markers mean you are moving closer to the VC and Lodge.

- What trail can you recommend for small children or the elderly?
 - The state does not rate our trails at the park nor mark them as easy, moderate, and difficult.
 - Are only recommendation for trails for children and the elderly are mileage (those trails closest to the visitor center such as Starved Rock or trails with immediate access from trail parking lots such as Illinois Canyon, Ottawa and Kaskaskia Canyons, and St. Louis Canyon. There are major staircases throughout the park, but there are benches to rest at along the way.

- Are there any handicap accessible trails at the park?
 - Unfortunately due to the topography of the park there are no handicap accessible trails to the canyons or waterfalls.
 - The most accessible trail would be the sidewalk at the lodge where visitors can view the cabins, woods, and art in the park or wooden tree sculptures.
 - The trail system to Illinois, Ottawa, and Kaskaskia Canyons does not have many stairs but is not a paved trail system and can sometimes include mud or water.

- Where are the boat and trolley tours?
 - Visitors may contact the lodge to purchase tickets and review timeframes and schedules of availability. 815-667-4211 or www.starvedrockstatepark.org.
 - All tours leave from the lodge which is separate from the state/IDNR and Visitor Center.
- Do you have kayak or canoe rental?
 - Yes, a private concessionaire –Kayak Starved Rock is located at Lone Point Shelter. You must call for hours and availability. 1-630-567-4653 kayakstarvedrock@gmail.com

- Are there restaurants, hotels, and other campgrounds in the area?
 - The lodge has a restaurant with a main dining room as well as a Veranda Bar and Grill.
 - Trailheads concession stand at the Visitor Center is open seasonally but there hours are posted in the lobby by the restrooms. They open at 10 am. Regardless of the season.
 - Visitor Center has a concessionaire brochure available to visitors with listings of hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, and more in the area.

- I have a hunting or fishing question?
 - Please refer to the hunting and fishing guides located on the back wall by the back doors. Visit the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov.
 - You may also contact the Park Ranger at 1-815-667-4726 M-F between 8-4.